

Strategy – Statewide Pace Car Program Spearheaded by State Employees

General Description

A Statewide Pace Car Program would recruit people to voluntarily travel within the posted speed limit on all roadways, beginning with State Employees. This is a way North Carolina residents can join together and set a good example for other drivers, especially younger drivers. The intent is for these drivers to act as pace cars by driving at the posted speed limit and limiting the opportunities for those behind them to drive in excess of the speed limit. Once there are enough Pace Car volunteers, the Pace Car Program Volunteers would actually be a mobile traffic calming system. North Carolina is the home of stock car racing and nearly everyone understands the concept and purpose of the pace car when it comes to racing. The basic principle of this program is that it clearly puts the accountability to drive responsibly on the motorists.

The Pace Car volunteers would sign a pledge to drive within the posted speed limit, drive courteously, and display an official Pace Car sticker on their vehicles. The volunteers would also pledge to recruit other volunteers to make the same pledge. The recruitment process would begin by distributing the pledge from to State Employees, possibly during Safety Meetings and encouraging them to volunteer. This strategy will involve gaining support from the various Department and Agency heads as well as peer support among the local work teams. Then the State Employee Volunteers could share the program with friends and family to recruit other volunteers.

Technical Attributes

Target	The target of this strategy is drivers on all roadways. The drivers who volunteer for the program also help manage speeds on the roads that they drive. Therefore, they will have an impact on all roadways.
Expected Effectiveness	Unknown; however, some communities in other states and countries have claimed that there are overall reductions in speed. Speed will be reduced at least momentarily at the locations where the pace cars are operating.
Keys to Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Promoting the program within the Departments.- Recruiting enough participants in the program.- Participants actually following through on their pledges.- Public education involving news and print media.
Potential Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A significant number of pledges are ignored.- Speeding motorists may react with “road rage” to perceived slower vehicles, and may actually drive more hazardously after passing the pace cars.
Appropriate Measures and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Number of drivers traveling faster than the posted speed limit.- Crashes involving vehicles traveling faster than the speed limit.
Associated Needs	Bumper stickers or other weather resistant displays are needed so volunteer vehicles could be recognized. This could be funded by sponsors who would help pay for the material and recruit their employees as participants. Also, an education component is required to broaden understanding among the citizenry of why speeding needs to be addressed as seriously as “Booze It and Lose It” or “Click It or Ticket” campaigns.

Organizational, Institutional, and Policy Issues	State government would be the focal point of the program. More serious consequences would be needed for those State Employees ticketed for speeding while on the job. In addition, it would be beneficial to recruit other large employers to participate in the program.
Issues Affecting Implementation Time	This program would have a relatively short start-up time. Since there is a program already active in North Carolina (Greensboro) and other cities across the country, the lead agency would have little original development. If sponsors were desired, there would be time requirements to recruit sponsors.
Costs	The costs would be those associated with printing the bumper stickers, electrostatic decals, pledge forms, program materials, and an effective website. Much of these costs may be offset with sponsors.
Training	Little training is required for this program.
Legislative Needs	No legislative activity is required for this program. However, it would be a good idea to get legislators to participate in the program.